

6/Dec/2006 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Dizzy Lizzy

It seems that the popularity of Tribute bands has waned over the last couple of years, which probably just means that only the really good ones have survived. On Saturday you can catch the world's number one Thin Lizzy tribute band down at the Horn in Victoria St, St Albans (just by the Station).

Limehouse Lizzy have been presenting a stirring and detailed tribute to Thin Lizzy for the past eleven years and are currently riding the wave of renaissance of music from the 70s and 80s. The original band – fronted by Phil Lynot - had a string of chart hits that included 'Whisky in the Jar', 'Dancing In The Moonlight', 'The Boys are Back in Town', 'Jailbreak' and even 'Parisienne Walkways'.



Thin Lizzy actually formed in Dublin in 1970 but moved across to London the following year and almost immediately broke into the British Charts with an arrangement of the traditional celtic folk song 'Whiskey in the Jar'. One of the things that I find interesting about the band is that they were not afraid to combine influences from their musical past with cutting edge pop/rock sounds to get an immensely appealing sound. They almost certainly influenced the later folk/punk movement characterised by the Pogues. Pan forward thirty years and the Lizzy sound is still influencing bands on the scene, for instance the twin guitar signature sound of 'The Darkness' – in fact their guitarist Dan often sports Thin Lizzy t-shirt.

This legacy is celebrated **Limehouse Lizzy** with genuine enthusiasm which has gained them a tremendous following with their current fan base standing at over 7,500 according to their PR people. Add to this the comments of Loaded Magazine; "the best tribute band in the world", Scott Gorham (one of Thin Lizzy's guitarists) "Phil would have approved" and even an endorsement from Phil Lynott's Mum then this is obviously going to be the gig to catch if you can. For more information about the band see their website at www.limehouselizzy.com or you can contact the venue on 01727 853143 or at www.thehorn.co.uk.

On Friday DTA Promotions are presenting **The Truth** (www.myspace.com/117224536), **Pirate Radio**, **The October Game** (www.myspace.com/theoctobergame) and **The Dregs** (www.myspace.com/thedregsband) at Hat Factory in Bute Street, Luton. The **Truth** reckon they're inspired by Rock 'n' Roll while Luton based **Pirate Radio** play combination of punk, ska and rock. **October Game** were formed from the ashes of Insomnia while The Dregs play music inspired by The Jam, The Smiths, The Specials and John O'Reilly Jnr. This gig is a 14+ event and the doors open at 8pm doors, £4 entry.

On Sunday you can see **Phonic Rapture**, **Grief Society** and **Transmission56** at The Exchange in King Street, Luton. For more information you can see the PDM website at www.pdmusic.com or you can contact the venue on 01582 729371. The doors open at 8pm and entry is just £1 thanks to the nice people at Fosters (note that this is an 18+ venue).

13/Dec/2006 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Festive Festival Rock



I tend to think of summer as the natural habitat of music festivals but this weekend the Students' Union Luton Campus of the University of Bedfordshire is going to host a two day rock music extravaganza featuring some of the best of local talent alongside bands from all over the country. The weekend is being organised by local promoter DTA and you can get still get day tickets for Saturday (£6) or a full weekend pass (£10) from www.ticketweb.co.uk. However the event is proving very popular - the day tickets for Sunday have sold out last week - so you'd better get your skates on if you want to tap into the music.

Just looking at the programme you see why the event is likely to sell out. Topping the bill on Saturday is **Devil Sold His Soul**, the uncrowned kings of the UK underground, with their ferocious power, bone crunching heaviness and soaring melody which received five Ks from Kerrang! On Sunday you can catch headliners **Enter Shikari** who are getting a lot of attention nationally with a mix modern Rock, Punk and Metal along with other genres such as Dance, Euphoria, Trance and Electronica. The resulting marriage of progressive rock music, atmospheric electronics and cheeky dance synthesis allied with their passionate live performance make them a definite 'must see' live band.

Other acts to check out are local bands **Imicus** and **Elements of Refusal** who between them cover a wide range of rock textures from the darker melodic rock of the former to the progressive metal/hardcore of the latter. There are far too many bands on the bill to go into any detail for the rest of them but the list looks pretty amazing with; **Exit Ten** (Metal/Hardcore), **Fell Silent** (raw vocals & powerful riffing), **The Lucida Console**, **Siren Lake**, **Omi Six** (their last ever show!), **Escape 1942**, **The Legend of Ron Jeremy** and **The Eyes of a Traitor** on Saturday and **Blacktop**, **Club Sex**, **Oakwood**, **Kids in Glasshouses** and a few more on Sunday. On Saturday the doors open at 4pm, with the last band finishing at around 11pm while on Sunday the doors open at 6pm with the final act of the weekend (Enter Shikari) playing till 10.30pm. See the DTA website (www.dtapromo.co.uk) for a full rundown of the bands.

On Friday you can catch **Reverie** - Dunstable Battle of the Band finalists - when they play a rare local gig at the George II pub in Bute St, Luton. Reverie's music is an idiosyncratic blend of atmospheric and manic guitar driven rock, with sonic stages ranging from King Crimson to U2. Liam from the band tells me that after a year mainly gigging in London they wanted to play on their home turf. The band has recently been recording some new demo tracks and will be giving away fifteen limited edition copies of the CD which contains some songs that have never before been heard in Luton. You can contact the band and download tracks from their website (www.reverieuk.com) or email them on info@reverieuk.com. Doors open at 7pm and it's free to get in.

20/Dec/2006 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Christmas Capers

On Friday the popular 'Rock Nights' gig is back at St Luke's in Leagrave with four bands on the bill helping to raise money for local charity LYWAG. The line up will include **Attika** who will be performing classics from the like of Metallica and Nirvana along side as well as original material and Luton's latest hot new thing - **Dead On Scene** - playing great indie rock. Entry is just two pounds and the gig is targeted at the under 21's and especially to provide a gig locally that under 18's can go and watch live bands. As normal the police cadets will be on hand mixing in with the crowds enjoying the music to make this not only one of the most fun gigs in town but also the safest. The venue is St Luke's Church Hall, High Street Leagrave and tickets will be available on the door and the event kicks off at 7pm. You can get more information from the website at www.lywag.org.uk.

On Saturday **The Suspects** are back home for a festive gig at the Royal Hotel in Mill Street, Luton following on from their successful performances at venues such as the Barfly, Dublin Castle and The Orange Club in London. The four piece indie rock outfit has been receiving a lot of media coverage and recently came out top in the BBC Three Counties Radio 'Battle of the Bands'. The band, which started life at Luton's Cardinal Newman High School, are planning to release their debut single in January, entitled 'Lost in a Daydream' which you can hear a preview of at their website

(www.thesuspectsmusic.co.uk) along with a few other demo tracks. You can also get a full length MP3 version of one of the tracks by signing to their email newsletter on line.



You may remember that I was very concerned about the effects on the new licensing legislation on live music and, while it hasn't caused the complete meltdown of music venues that some people predicted, it certainly hasn't achieved one of its aims – namely to encourage live music. In fact about 40% of pubs and clubs have lost their automatic right to have some kind of live music. In fact if you get it wrong the promoter and the musicians are liable to face criminal charges and a fine of up to £20,000 and six months in prison which sounds pretty draconian to me as you don't even get that kind of sentence for many violent crimes. It seems that I'm not the only one who feels this way as Dominic Cronin has started a petition at the Prime Minister's website that music and dance should not be restricted by burdensome licensing regulations (<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/licensing>). So if you'd like to see the unnecessary red tape removed from putting on music then be sure to vote. Now that would be a nice Christmas present!

I've finally given in and joined the myspace revolution; you can check me out on line and join up to my 'friend' list at www.myspace.com/enquk. There are also sound and video clips as well as information about enQ band members. See you in cyberspace!

29/Dec/2006 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

New Year thoughts...

Another year has fled by and this time of year I usually take a look at the local music scene to see how it's going. This year has seen a crop of local promoters like PDM (www.pdmmusic.com) and DTA (www.dtapromo.co.uk) putting on a large number of gigs featuring both local and national bands in a variety of venues around Luton. This trend is set to continue; for instance Dee from SHOOTtheSUN tells me that they are working quietly behind the scenes on some projects that will bear fruit in the New Year. The main problem in the area is still the lack of venues, with Luton only really having the Hat Factory Basement and the University Union as viable venues for local bands that want to be accessible to under 18's.

Over in Dunstable the situation is even worse with nothing at all until the Grove Theatre opens in April. The replacement for the Queensway Hall should give a real boost for the local entertainment scene with a range of music and theatrical productions. But unfortunately the early promises of a 'multi-purpose' venue don't seem to have made it through to the final design. So unlike the original Queensway Hall, there is just the one performance area which – due to commercial pressures – will be quite expensive to hire. So I can't see that the long running Dunstable Town Council Battle of the Bands competition will be ever be able to start up again due to the lack of a suitable venue.

On the band front, the **Imperial Vipers** (www.imperialvipers.com) have done very well for themselves with a lot of good editorial from the national press and quite a punishing touring schedule. However they are just the tip of the iceberg representing a very healthy local band scene of both high quality original and covers music being pumped out in the backbone of the local music scene – the pubs. Over in Luton the most active venues seem to be the George II in Bute St and the Exchange while in Dunstable the Wheatsheaf in High St North, the Glider and the White Lion in High St South seem to be the most active music venues. Out of town, the Horn in St Albans and Esquires in Bedford are still the premiere local dedicated music venues.

Finally, a gig to go to in the no man's land between Christmas and New Year; **The Culture** will be playing over at Esquires on Friday supporting the **New Groove Formation**. They tell me that they are putting the final touches on a new demo CD which includes a bunch of new tunes which you will be able to listen to on www.myspace.com/theculture.

Don't forget that you can let Tony Blair know how you feel about the effect of the new licensing laws on the performance of music and dance by signing the petition on the Prime Minister's website (<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/licensing>). So if you'd like to see the unnecessary red tape removed from putting on music then be sure to vote. Tony should really take note since he's going to be out of a job soon and may have to supplement his wife's income by doing a few gigs down his local.

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Send gig information to "The Brian Heywood Column", PO Box 649, Dunstable, Beds, LU5 4XD and you can also email details of gigs, gossip, web sites or anything else to info@lutonscene.com. A searchable archive of the column is available on the web at <http://www.lutonscene.com>. Brian can be found on MySpace at enquk.

